'This unputdownable graphic novel, like all great literature, makes you feel slightly less alone. Ian Williams gently points out what’s under our noses but what we might not yet have managed to articulate. It shows us – through good observation and by being funny – how the ordinary is extraordinary.'
—Philippa Perry

'Gentle, thoughtful, humorous, and with a real light touch: I enjoyed the different stories, the well-realised world it created and, like any good fiction, the view of another internal life.'
—Bryan Talbot

'Skilfully told, relentlessly honest, often funny and painfully true... this is courageous work. It should be read by every student and practising professional out there, and in the larger world as well. Ian Williams is my hero and I wish he were my doctor, too!'
—David Small

'Amazing... crafted with a consistent wit in which the cartoon narrator spares himself no less than his patients. This profoundly honest doctor pursues his humanitarian mission while exorcising personal demons. Williams gives us a dose of insight and laughter that is germane not only to the comics medium, but also to medicine itself.'
—Justin Green

'A helpful, insightful adventure into the dynamic of the doctor/patient relationship. The Bad Doctor's elegant renderings illuminate the mind and explore the relationships that don't always have a happy ending. A very original and honest view of a highly personal examination of the human psyche.'
—Ron Turner, Last Gasp Comics
Hey, Fred!

Hi, Doc!

I heard about the accident yesterday. I hope you're okay.

I feared the worst, I'm telling you.

I had more pain. I figured the ambulances were coming, so I didn't call the doctor.

I'm not sure what happened last night.

Ah, bloody hell, yes!

I told him I wasn't going to go anywhere. Oh, so you're not going to the hospital?

The ambulance couldn't give me any more pain reliever. They took me to the hospital.

Then what happened?
The note they sent through to the surgery suggested you were...

'angry and aggressive'.

WHAT?

THE BLOODY CHEEK!

He was a bit angry, doctor, but he wasn't rude to them.

I think I'd have been a bit angry too!

It doesn't sound like they were very helpful.

Does that mean they'll put me on some sort of 'black list'?

I'll ring ambulance control and raise it with them.

The out-of-hours service too...

They should come and see people like you at home.

Basket cases like me that are about to snuff it, you mean!

What did you do about the pain?

Cocodamo! and whisky.

Is that OK, doctor, to take the pills with whisky?

So long as you don't overdose it, yes.
ANKURIN COTTER TO SEE DR. JAMES PLEASE.

I, er... can't.

A practice decision.

When I booked the appointment the receptionist assured me that you would do it.
and that you would charge me FORTY POUNDS for the privilege.

We, umm, stopped signing them.

We just decided this week.

We haven't told the receptionists yet.

What prompted this DECISION?

It's just a big responsibility to say someone is safe to have a shotgun.

Have you lost trust in your patients... or your judgement on whether they are fit to own a gun?

That's all.

What can I do for you?

I need you to sign my shotgun licence.

I want you to sign my shotgun licence.

I need to renew it.
We just don't know some patients very well and it can be difficult to say no...

Isn't that precisely why doctors are paid such a huge salary?

To take responsibility?

Well yes, but it's difficult with guns...

This guy makes me feel very uncomfortable, but it raises the question of why we should saddle ourselves with the responsibility.

Oh, don't be so bloody WET, Iwan!

Everyone is out to blame someone nowadays and if one of our patients goes ape with a shotgun, people will point the finger at us.

Robert! Lois!

I've just made an executive decision!

Aneurin Cotter wanted me to sign his shotgun licence and I told him we'd stopped doing them.

Just because you can't say 'no' to one weirdo creep, you want to change practice policy?

What about people who NEED shotguns... farmers, for example? We provide a service for them.

Great! Why did you do that?

Well, I'd be happy to stop signing them.

They can get the licence from signed by a police officer or a J.P.

I'd really question how many people NEED shotguns, and as for farmers... they're the biggest bunch of weirdos out there!

Well, I'm happy to side with Iwan but Robert, if you want to continue, that's fine.

We'll tell Cotter to come and talk to you.

Yazami
I can't help it. It reduces psychic tension.

I wish you were there, but it's so unpleasant!

So can I.

I'm going for a ride.

That will be ready by then. If the thing only works.
Don't listen, Roy... it's absolutely DISGUSTING!

So what's with the charted obscenities? I could hear you coming up the hill!

What's up, Doc?

People will think you're nuts!!

I'm sorry.

It's either that or killing Robert.

So how is your senior partner?

The same. Bellicose, obsessed with money... and uses any excuse to avoid actually seeing patients.

Does he still talk to the dead?

Oh, yes.

He's convinced he has 'the gift'.

That's insane.

Does he ever use his gift with the patients?

Yep.

I sincerely hope not.

Do you fancy a pint?

I should get home for eight, but we could pop into the Formers on the way back.

Oh, nothing new.

Partnership squabbles?
FARMERS ARMS

Hi, guys!

Good ride?

Hi, gentz. Mind if I join you?

I'll get you a drink.

Please do!

Thanks, Iwan. I'll have a vodka and tonic.

Nice shorts!

Not bad.

What news from the world of long rubber gloves?

Well... I just got made a partner!

Hey! That's great!

Brilliant, Dave! About time too.

How about you, Dave? Celebratory drink?

Do you two know each other?

Cheers Iwan!

I'll have an IPA.

Yes.

We've met.

A big step.

Yeah. Feels right, though.

Hey, isn't that YOUR partner, Iwan, coming down the road?

A pint of IPA and a vodka and tonic, please.

Those pills you gave me, D... They're working a treat!
Thanks, Ivan.

You look a little worried.

It’s pretty early, Jack.

Cherny!

Cherny!

Thanks, Jack.

I’ll look after her now.

Do you want me to call off.

We’d better head off soon.

She was only just awoken.

She was only just awoken.
I wish I knew your secret.

The girls seem to love you.

Look, she's coming back!

Maybe it's your hair. That other fellow’s hair is cool.

Huh, well, I've been told it looks 'natural.'

Sure, let's go.
Good work! Good job! Good feeling!

The groups always help you feel better.

Derek Brown, go see Dr. Jones please.

Heard you're here, too!

Hi.
Come in, Mr. Brown.

So how’s it going?

I should’ve been on top of it.

I don’t want to remember her like that… it was like some terrible nightmare. I can’t get her face out of my mind.

She was only semi-conscious at the time… she’s not suffering now.

It feels like this pain is never going to get better.

It will, but it’ll take time.

It’s early days.

CRAP.

The end…

it shouldn’t have been like that.

Sometimes things get beyond our control. Despite everything.
I don't know who to blame for this...

I blame everyone!

That's normal at this stage.

You're trying to process it all.

How was Mr Brown?

Bit of a nightmare?

pfft... yeah! I dread seeing him, the poor bastard.

How long is it now since his wife died?

Coming up to a year.

It was all pretty horrible, by the sound of it.

It was chaos there... she was in blue agony, the district nurses were trying to take charge and he was telling them to get off her.

He always wanted to control everything.

It was dreadful.

He was trying to feed her and she aspirated.

It took a couple of hours but she basically choked on the soup he'd made her.

The nurses complained that he wouldn't let them do their job.
They had a DEBRIEF about it!

For God's sake! His wife was dying of motor neurone disease!

Mind you... at least he let them through the door...

They said they'd been TRAUMATISED by his behaviour!

Oohh... you're DYING... how does that make you FEEL?

Most of our terminally ill patients HATE her...

Hahaha

(cough)

I'm quite worried about him, though. He's so brittle.

He tells me that he's looked up ways of committing suicide, although I don't think he's actually planning it.

He told me that the only thing that relieves the pain is masturbation...

but afterwards his self-loathing gets worse, especially when he sees his wife's photograph on the sideboard.

He's worried he's becoming addicted to porn!

God.

Poor bugger!
Heh heh. Looks like they got the medical student to sew me up!

That's bonkers!
The scar is the only bit of the operation that you can see!

You could sue them for that!

Why would I want to do that?

I'm seventy-five, I don't give a damn about how I look.

It didn't cost me anything and I've got a new lease of life!
You're very quiet, mate.

Everything OK?

Oh...

you know when...

when you think you finally know what you want...

or what you want to do...

but your life means you can't have it, or do anything about it...

without looking ridiculous?

Bit of a midlife crisis creeping in?

Well...

with me it's been more like one long whole-life crisis.

Want to grab a coffee?

No, it's OK, thanks.

Fancy a pint?

No.

Hey! Look at that!

Yeah.
Iwan...

your bins seem to be taking over.

Half of this stuff is out of date!

You've got five tins of barbecue beans...

And what's with the six bottles of shampoo in the shower?

But you've just been to the corner shop to buy some more!

You're acting rather strange.

I'm just not very organised.

Bollocks! There's something up with you!

And to be honest, mate, we're all a bit sick of you hogging the shower for hours at a time!

What the hell do you do in there?

What's going on?

Well, try me!

NO?

I've done my psychology module.

If you have to spank the monkey quite so often, at least think of the rest of us and do it in your own room!
STEP ON IT, MOTHER!

What can I do for you, Mr. Roberts?
Thanks for seeing me, Ivan. These headaches are getting worse.
Hmm... This has been going on for some time now...

God's sake.

I think we should get a scan and refer you to a neurologist.

Mr. Roberts to see Dr. James, please.

We'll need to do some blood tests first.

How's Mrs. Roberts?

Zack Mills to see Dr. James, please.
So how’s it going?

Well, I’ve taken the tablets for a week...

I certainly don’t feel any different, but you warned me about that.

Low.

Wow.

In Leicester.

So what happened?

I never got there...

I went mad.

I became convinced that I might attack and kill someone.

I developed all sorts of phobias to try and drive the thoughts from my head.

I couldn’t go out. I had to avoid people.

I ended up on a psychiatric ward, hooked on sedatives and wanting to die.

I was a mess for a couple of years. The prospect of university dropped off the agenda.

I felt dreadful for a couple of days.

That’s normal.

They take a couple of weeks to kick in.

I wanted to ask you about your life.

When did your OCD start?

I felt a kind of breakdown.

Probably in my teens.

Just before my 'A' Levels.

I had a place to go to university, but I had a kind of breakdown.

What were you going to study?

The psychiatrist I was under told my parents that I would probably never be able to work...

but after a while I got a job at a local glass-coating works and trained as a technician.

Fifteen years. Then it all went wrong again.

How long did you work there?
I started to associate certain parts of the coating process with bad luck.

I couldn't do my job properly, so I lost it. Then I started drinking and didn't stop for a couple of years.

I either finished them because things didn't 'feel right' to me... or I would constantly worry that the girl would change her mind and go away... and end up driving her away. Either way, I'd screw it up, and the more I screwed up the more I hated myself.

The more I hated myself, the more complex my obsessions got, and I became convinced that I was responsible for all kinds of calamities.

I was spending all day in mental rituals trying to avoid some sort of catastrophe...

I must sound completely mad.

What about relationships?

Well, I've had quite a few, although I've never settled. Never got married, or had kids...

It might sound mad to some...

but not to me.

Oh. That's good.

If I tell you something, would you promise to keep it secret?

Of course.

It's just that, while doctors must keep their patients' information confidential, there is no reciprocal agreement.

I've had a few patients with OCD over the years, but I've never told any of them this...

Nor any of my partners, nor many friends, and I'm not sure why I feel like sharing this with you...

but I'm about the same age as you and I had OCD when I was younger.
It developed in my teens and I had it right through medical school.

What sort of treatment did you get?

Oh... right... that's...

It was hellish. I thought I was insane.

I just tried to act as normally as I could. It wasn't until years later that I sought help.

None. I hid it.

Oh, and I drank very heavily... but that wasn't unusual at medical school.

Did you know what was wrong with you?

I was terrified. I thought I was schizophrenic at first. Then I did some reading in the medical library and it all fitted with OCD.